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Notes

[Contributions in the form of notes or discussions should be sent to John A. Scott, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.]

Ζωή μου AGAIN

In arguing (*Classical Journal*, XI, 368-69) that Ζωή of the refrain in Byron's *Maid of Athens* is a proper name, Professor John A. Scott adduces the testimony of an educated Greek "that no one in Greece would regard Ζωή as anything but a proper name . . . and that σᾶς implies a certain aloofness and dignified reserve which would be impossible if the first word meant 'life.' " This may or may not imply that Ζωή μου is not to be used as a term of endearment; it does imply that σᾶς is naturally and correctly used when Ζωή μου means "My Zoe."

It is always hazardous to trust one's *Sprachgefühl* in languages imperfectly known, and I should not think of taking issue with an educated Greek. And so I have sought assurance from several Greeks, one of them of fair education, that Ζωή μου and ψυχή μου are still common terms of endearment. My feeling, too, is that the 'aloof' σᾶς is unnatural or incorrect in this poem, whether Ζωή μου is "My life" or "My Zoe."

The correspondence of σᾶς with *Sie* and σέ with *dich* is not perfect, yet close enough for illustration. A German would not, indeed, ordinarily say "Mein Leben, ich liebe Sie," although the lover in Zschokke's *Das Wirtshaus zu Cransac* does say to his beloved, "Ich atme nur für Sie, ich liebe nur Sie." But he is a Herr Oberst, and his medium is prose. In poetry, at least, would not a German always say "Ich liebe dich," whether he had addressed his beloved as "Mein Leben" or "Meine Annette"? The tone of poems like "Maid of Athens" excludes *Sie* and σᾶς and "you" as alike discordant. In his note on the poem Byron correctly translates σᾶς by you, apparently unconscious of the discord; while in the poem itself he uses "thy" and "thee" and names the little maid "sweet"!—out of all harmony with the "dignified reserve" of σᾶς.

The use of σᾶς, then, does not seem to prove that Ζωή μου must mean "My Zoe"; but it does raise a doubt as to Byron's knowledge of modern Greek in 1810. We learn from a letter written at Prevesa in November, 1809, that he was going to Athens to study modern Greek, and in two letters of May, 1810, he claims a fair speaking ability in the language. In January, 1811, we find him studying with a "master" at Athens. In this year Byron wrote his *Remarks on the Romæic or Modern Greek Language*, in which are inserted "Familiar Dialogues," a number of Greek-English phrases listed under five

heads. Under "Affectionate Expressions" occur, among others, *Ζωή μου* "My life," and *Ἀκριβή μου ψυχή*, "My dear soul." Under "To Thank, Pay Compliments, and Testify Regards" are found *Σὺς ἀγαπῶ* and *τὸν ἀγαπῶ*, where, however, the verb has not the meaning it bears in the poem. Under the same head is listed *ταπεινότητος* δοῦλος, which Byron uses in signing one of the letters of May, 1810.

It would be interesting to know the provenance of this vade mecum of Byron's. He possessed a *τρίγλωσσον*, probably Greek-French-Italian, and had no modern Greek grammar in English. Whether compiled by himself or by his "Romaic master," Marmarotouni, the "Dialogues," while showing kinship to their fellows in all languages, are as a whole admirably fitted to his lordship's own use and custom.

It is quite possible that in these and similar "Dialogues" we are to find the store from which Byron was drawing the meager stock of words and phrases that gave him ability in the language "to order and discourse more than enough for a reasonable man."

The source of this refrain, then, seems not to have been the passage of Juvenal (ii. 6. 195), which was an after-thought rather than a suggestion. And I venture to believe that the verse had better been written *Ζωή μου σὲ ἀγαπῶ* and translated "My life, I love thee."

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THE HOME OF SARAPIS

The vexed question of the origin of the Sarapis cult is left open by Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, pp. 111-12. In the literature of the subject (cf. *op. cit.*, p. 335, n. 1, and C. F. Lehman-Haupt's article on "Sarapis" in the *Roscher Lexikon* [1910], and the references there cited) I have seen no mention made of an interesting anecdote of Diogenes, which may help the argument of those who derive Sarapis from Sinope.

Diogenes Laertius in the *Vitae Phil.* vi. 64 says of Diogenes the Cynic, *ψηφισαμένων Ἀθηναίων Ἀλέξανδρον Διόνυσον καμὲ ἔθη Σάραπιν ποιήσατε*. The connection of Alexander with Dionysus is of course due to the spread of the Dionysus cult in Macedon, (cf. Plutarch, *Alex.* c. 2), which was so marked that Dionysus has been called the "first Macedonian conqueror of Greece" (Dyer, *Gods in Greece*, p. 79). It will be remembered that the Bacchae was written for a Macedonian prince at a Macedonian court. The mother of Alexander, Olympias, was an especial votary of the god (Plut. *op. cit.*).

The Cynic Diogenes came from Sinope, but the words have no point unless Sarapis was at the time widely known as a Sinopean divinity.

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